

The National Security Act of 1947, as amended, placed on the Director of Central Intelligence the responsibility for protecting intelligence sources and methods from unauthorized disclosure. Unfortunately, the responsibility thus placed gave the Director (or the Government) no authority commensurate with carrying out the statutory responsibility. Seeking to remedy this situation, and after much discussion with the Department of Justice and other concerned entities in the Executive branch, President Ford forwarded remedial legislation to the Congress in February 1976. There it died, and similar legislation should now be enacted.

President Ford stated that it was essential that "the irresponsible and dangerous exposure of our Nation's intelligence secrets be stopped." With this statement we are wholeheartedly in accord. The Ford proposal would provide criminal penalties for unauthorized disclosure of intelligence sources and methods - sanctions which apply by statute at present to some thirty categories of disclosure of government information but not to intelligence! The proposed law would apply only to persons who have had access to information concerning intelligence sources and methods as a result of their being in a position of trust by virtue of being a government employee or an employee of a contractor with the government in this field. All media personnel would be excluded. Provisions are also included for injunctive action where speed is essential to avoid violations of the law's provisions. We feel strongly and urge that such legislation receive early and favorable consideration by the Congress.